works and for effective funding of the projects in the flood sector besides mobilising youths for the purpose. Secretary (Irrigation), Government of Andhra Pradesh is a Member of the Southern Regional Task Force. The final report of the Task Force is expected to suggest comprehensive solution to the flood problem of each State.

Sinking of artesian wells in Tamil Nadu

1319. SHRI S. NIRAIKULATHAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would consider sinking artesian wells in completely dry and backward districts like Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu to provide water for drinking and irrigation;

(b) whether Government have any programme for such dry regions to enable farmers to cultivate their land lying barren now; and

(c) if not, whether Government would consider a scheme for developing the region?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCE (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) Sinking of wells for drinking water and irrigation is planned, financed and implemented by the State Government. However, in its programme of scientific exploration of ground water the Central Ground Water Board has identified an artesian belt in an area of 4600 sq. kilometers in Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry, including Ramanthapuram district.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. Development of ground water for various purposes, including sinking of artesian wells for cultivation in dry regions, is the responsbility of State Governments. However, the district of Ramanthapuram in Tamil Nadu has been covered under the Drought Prone Area Programme being implemented by the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment under which development of such areas is taken up on watershed project basis. A Comprehensive Watershed Development Project supported by Danish International Development Agency was also launched in the district of Ramanthapuram in the year 1994 with the objective to check further land degradation and develop sustainable and cost effective system for utilisation of land resources and create long term opportunities for employment of local committees. The main contents of the project include development of agro-forestry, dry-land horticulture system and conservation of rain water.

Financial Assistance to Bhagiratha Project

1320. SHRIMATI REMUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Andhra Pradesh Government has submitted a proposal in February, 1996 for financial assistance for Bhagiratha river water project;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the districts to be benefited as per the proposals; and

(d) the reasons for delay in sanctioning the project?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Protection of coastal Land in Andhra Pradesh

1321. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any schemes for protection of Coastal Land in Andhra Pradesh from Sea erosion has been drawn up;

(b) if so, the details of areas included in the scheme;

(c) the amount likely to be spent on the scheme; and

(d) whether any time-frame has been laid down for implementation?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) Yes, Sir.